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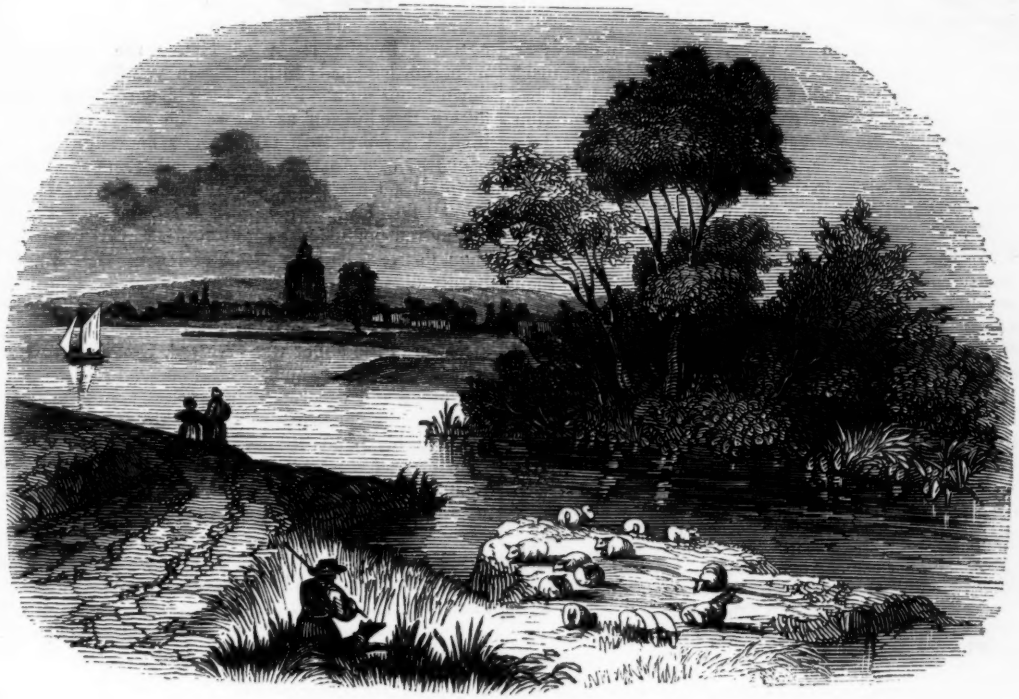
THE BANKS OF THE THAMES. III.



THE VILLAGE OF BRAY.

Man is a glass, life is as water weakly walled about,
Sin brought in Death, Death breaks the glass, so runs this water out.

SUCH is the quaint and not inapplicable inscription which is placed beneath a figure of Death, in the church of Long Wittenham, where we resume our Thames journey. This little village is situated three or four miles from Abingdon, on the London side; and from that point the river takes a sudden bend towards the north-west, in the direction of the village of Clifton, in Oxfordshire. From thence, another bend leads the river between Little Wittenham in Berkshire and the village of Dorchester in Oxfordshire; near which latter village the river Thame joins the Isis, and with it forms the future Thames.

Of this tributary, the Thame, Dr. Plot said:—

The banks of the Thame are so well sated with some kind of acid, that no well water in the whole town of the name (meaning the town of Thame in Oxfordshire, through which it flows) will either brew or lather with soap*. But none of these give a tincture so high that they can be perceived by the most exquisite palate, but only so far forth as may conduce to a due fermentation, and to keep them living; and yet without doubt, from hence it is that the Thame's water, at sea, in eight months' time acquires so spirituous and active a quality that upon opening some of the casks, and holding the candle near the bung-hole, the steams have taken fire like spirit of wine, and sometimes endangered firing the ship.

Some portion of these remarks are corroborated by later experience; but there seems little doubt that the case is greatly overrated.

* For the *acid* spoken of by Dr. Plot we must probably read carbonate or sulphate of lime in solution.

Much discussion has taken place respecting the propriety of applying the name Thames to that part only of the river which is below the junction with the Thame. Mr. Brewer states that in several Saxon documents still existing, the name of Thames is applied to the river far above the point of junction here alluded to, and that the term Isis for the higher parts of the river is a modern innovation. This question, however, is merely a nominal one, and need not demand our further notice.

From the point where the Thame joins the Isis, till we arrive at the town of Wallingford, the voyager down the Thames meets with a succession of beautiful scenery; the easy sloping hills on the Berkshire side are crowned with a variegated combination of sylvan objects; while an occasional break in the chalky cliff gives a strikingly diversified character to the view. Wallingford, which is about ten miles from Abingdon, is an ancient town. It was originally a Roman fortification; and passed successively into the hands of the Saxons and the Danes, after which it became a royal prescriptive borough in the reign of Edward the Confessor. The Castle of Wallingford, to which the town owes its origin, became in after ages the scene of many important events; but during the wars of the Commonwealth it was completely demolished. The town is situated on the road between Reading and Oxford, and has a remarkably neat and clean appearance. It consists, principally, of two streets, well-paved and lighted. Of the old bridge, which stood when Mr. Ireland wrote, he says:—"The antiquity of the bridge, from its appearance, seems to vie with the oldest structure of the kind on the Thames; it is truly gothic, and of immense strength. The pointed angular

sterlings on the upper side are so well constructed, as to be capable of resisting the most violent torrent of water from the winter floods." Since that time, however, a very elegant stone bridge has been built across the Thames at Wallingford. Among the natives of Wallingford was Richard, abbot of the monastery which formerly existed here; he was the inventor of a curious clock, which, according to Leland, represented not only the course of the sun, moon, and principal stars, but also the ebbing and flowing of the sea. This machine, the most ingenious of its kind at that time in England, he presented to the Abbey church.

Mr. Brayley some years ago described a farm, situated two or three miles from the river, near Wallingford, as having once been reputed the largest and most compact in England. It was called Cholsey farm, and had belonged to the Abbot of Reading before the dissolution of monasteries. The great barn, wherein he is said to have deposited his tithes, measured three hundred feet long by fifty or sixty in breadth. The roof was supported by seventeen pillars on each side, each pillar about four feet in diameter. These pillars elevated the roof to a great height in the centre; but it descended gradually towards the walls, which were not more than eight feet in height.

The river presents many beautiful prospects while passing between Berkshire and Oxfordshire. Pope speaks of many of the tributary streams here poured into the Thames, in the following lines:—

From his oozy bed
Old Father *Thames* advanced his rev'rend head;
His tresses dropped with dews, and o'er the stream
His shining horns diffused a golden gleam:
Graved on his urn appeared the moon, that guides
His swelling waters, and alternate tides;
The figured streams, in waves of silver rolled,
And on her banks Augusta, robed in gold;
Around his throne the sea-born brothers stood,
Who swell with tributary urns his flood:
First, the famed authors of his ancient name,
The winding *Isis*, and the fruitful *Thame*,
The *Kennet* swift, for silver eels renowned;
The *Loddon* slow, with verdant alders crowned;
Cole, whose dark streams his flowery islands lave;
And chalky *Wey*, that rolls a milky wave;
The blue transparent *Vandalis* appears;
The gulfy *Lea* his sedgy tresses rears;
And sullen *Mole*, that hides his diving flood;
And silent *Darent*, stained with Danish blood.

From Wallingford, proceeding in our course down the river, we come first to Brightwell, not far distant from that town; then to Mongewell, a pretty spot on the Oxfordshire side of the river; then to the village of Moulsford, backed by the hills of Oxfordshire; and soon after to the village of Goring, "whose romantic and sequestered situation," it has been observed, "it is not possible for the eye of observation to pass unnoticed: the Berkshire hills form a rich variegated back-ground, and the easy ascent of the lawns in front happily intersect the principal objects, and give a charming relief to the whole." Opposite to this village, on the Berkshire side of the river, we meet with the village of Streatly, and further on, those of Basselden and Pangbourn, near which latter place the river widens considerably, and is much frequented by anglers, "who occasionally find equal cause for an exertion of their patience and of their skill."

Several other pretty villages occur, on both banks of the river, until at length we arrive at Reading, the principal town in Berkshire. This town is supposed by Camden to have derived its name from the great quantities of *fern* that grew in the neighbourhood, the ancient name of which was redyng. All writers agree, that this is a very ancient town, although they do not agree as to who was its founder. It appears to have been held in succession by the Saxons and the Danes, and to have been the seat of a nunnery, established by Elfrida, mother-in-law of Edward the Martyr. An abbey, afterwards very celebrated, was founded here by Henry the First, for the maintenance of two hundred Benedictine monks, about the year 1120. The abbot and monks were bound, by an obligation in their charter, to provide the poor and all travellers with necessary entertainment; while, on the other hand, they were invested with the power of trying criminals, and with the privilege of exemption for all tolls or customs for the lands which they held.

The abbots are said to have paid rather more attention to their own good living than to the support of the poor; and an odd incident is told by Fuller, as having occurred in the reign of Henry the Eighth. This monarch, having been hunting in Windsor Forest, went down about dinner-time to the abbey of Reading, where, designating himself as one of the king's guard, he was invited to the abbot's table. His appetite, being sharpened by exercise, he fed so heartily from a joint of beef, as to attract the notice of the master of the ceremonies. "Well fare my heart," quoth the abbot, "I would give a hundred pounds if I could feed so heartily on beef as thou dost. Alas! my weak and squeazie stomach will hardly digest the wing of a chicken." The monarch, having appeased his hunger, thanked the abbot for his good cheer, and departed undiscovered. Some weeks afterwards the abbot was arrested, conveyed to London, sent to the Tower, and allowed no food for several days but bread and water. This treatment, together with his fears for the consequence of the king's displeasure, soon reduced his pampered condition; and, at last, when a joint of beef was laid before him, he ate like a famished ploughman. When he had finished his meal, the king, who had been a hidden spectator, broke from his concealment. "My lord," said he, laughing, "presently deposit your hundred pieces of gold, or else no going hence all the days of your life. I have been the physician to cure your squeazie stomach; and now, as I deserve, demand my fee for so doing." The abbot paid this curious physician's fee; glad to obtain his liberty from such an equivocal host as Henry.

Reading is situated on two small eminences, whose gentle declivities fall into a pleasant vale, through which the branches of the river Kennet flow calmly till they unite with the Thames at the extremity of the town. The surrounding country is agreeably diversified with an intermixture of hill and dale, wood and water, and ornamented with a number of elegant seats. The prospect from the Forebury, (a corruption of Fauxbourg,) a beautiful outwork on the north-east side of the town, is very extensive, commanding a fine view over a considerable part of Oxfordshire.

The town of Reading, being the chief place in the county, is too considerable to be described here; and we shall probably devote a separate article to it hereafter. We therefore proceed in our eastward journey along the Thames.

After the confluence of the Kennet with the Thames, a distance of three miles brings us to Sunning Bridge; which is situated near a small but ancient village of that name. Still further on we arrive at the village of Wargrave; a short distance from which is seen the town of Henley, on the Oxfordshire side of the river. This is a clean and cheerful town, situated near the base of a cluster of hills, in one of the most agreeable windings of the Thames. The buildings in the principal street are handsome and capacious, though far from regular. The more ancient tenements, in the several minor avenues which diverge from the great thoroughfare, are mean and incommodious; but the beauty of the situation has induced many private families to erect elegant houses; and a spirit of improvement is manifested everywhere. The church is an irregular Gothic structure, chiefly remarkable for a punning epitaph on Mr. and Mrs. Elme, natives of the town:—

This *Elme*, in years and worth well groune,
Death at the appointed time *cut doune*,
The ivy fades, her propp once gone;
Thus fallne, both lye under this stone.
But lye, afresh to spring, grow, spread,
When every tree shall rise that's dead.

It is well known how fondly every admirer of genius estimates any scrap of writing from the hand of a distinguished man; and it is from such a feeling that Henley preserves the memory of a few lines written by Shenstone. The poet wrote with a diamond, on a pane of glass in a window of the Red Lion Inn, adjoining the Thames, the following lines:—

To thee, fair Freedom! I retire,
From flattery, cards, and dice, and din.
Nor art thou found in mansions higher
Than the low cot or country inn.

One of the most striking objects for which the vicinity of Henley is celebrated, is Park Place, a beautiful seat in the outskirts of the town. The mansion was first the residence of Lord Archibald Hamilton, in the early part of the last century; and, at a subsequent period, it was inhabited by Prince Frederic, the father of King George the Third. Marshal Conway and the Earl of Malmsbury became in succession its proprietors; and each one increased the beauties of a spot which has been deemed one of the finest of the kind in England. It has been said of Park Place, that, "its successive and ever-varying projections, with their intervening valleys, its rich woods, spacious groves, wide-spreading lawns, and bold declivities, are in a style and form which the landscapes that are enlivened and reflected by the Thames do not display in any other part of its course. Nature has done much, nor has taste done less: the genius of the place has everywhere been consulted, and the resulting conformities completed. Marshal Conway seems ever to have had in view the precepts of Pope, who had himself broken from the formality of fashion, and stolen a peep of nature in his garden at Twickenham:—

To build, to plant, whatever you intend
To rear the column or the arch to bend,
To swell the terrace or to sink the grot;
In all, let nature never be forgot.
But treat the goddess like a modest fair,
Nor over-dress, nor leave her wholly bare;
Let not each beauty everywhere be spied,
Where half the skill is decently to hide;
He gains all points who pleasingly confounds,
Surprises, varies, and conceals the bounds.
Consult the genius of the place in all,
That tells the waters or to rise or fall,
Or helps th' ambitious hill the heav'ns to scale.
Or scoops in circling theatres the vale,
Calls in the country, catches op'ning glades,
Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades;
Now breaks, or now directs th' intending lines,
And in one whole involves the fair designs.

It has been a maxim with me to admit of an easy reconciliation with a person, whose offence proceeded from no depravity of heart; but where I was convinced it did so, to forego, for my own sake, all opportunities of revenge; to forget the persons of my enemies as much as I was able, and to call to remembrance, in their place, the more pleasing idea of my friends. I am convinced that I have derived no small share of happiness from this principle.—SHENSTONE.

In story-telling, besides the marking distinct characters, and selecting pertinent circumstances, it is likewise necessary to leave off in time, and end smartly. So that there is a kind of drama in the forming of a story, and the manner of conducting and pointing it is the same as in an epigram. It is a miserable thing, after one hath raised the expectation of the company by humorous characters, and a pretty conceit, to pursue the matter too far. There is no retreating, and how poor is it for a storyteller to end his relation by saying "that's all!"—STEELE.

OPTICAL ILLUSIONS. III.

Fig. 4.

Fig. 5.

In our last paper on this subject, we described several experiments which show, that bodies in rotation may, under certain circumstances, appear to the eye to be stationary, and that by a further modification of the apparatus employed, the straight lines constituting or forming part of that object, may appear as if curved. In illustration of the latter fact, we gave cuts showing the curved forms given to the twelve radii, six red and six black, of which a star-like disk is formed. We now proceed to other figures.

A beautiful but very simple change in the apparent figure of a *striated* disk, is made by merely causing it to revolve, and viewing it in the usual way without reflexion from a mirror. Fig. 4, represents a disk painted in this way with fifteen stripes, eight white and seven black, but of course any two colours would do. If this be made to rotate, it presents the appearance of Fig. 5, in which we have a central white spot, surrounded by six concentric circles, three white and three black. The law which regulates the production of these rings is probably as follows:—Whatever tint predominates at any point of the disk, the rapidity of rotation causes the same tint to appear at every other point equidistant from the centre; and to ascertain what that tint would be, describe a concentric circle through that point, and by adding the dark portions through which it would pass into one series, and the light portions into another, by combining the two aggregates we may ascertain beforehand what number of concentric circles will result. The outlines are, as may be supposed, not clearly defined, but melt into each other.

In the instance represented in our cut, the dark stripes form an odd number, and the proportion of white is greater than that of the black; from which result the production of rings, alternately light and dark. But suppose the proportions of the two colours to be exactly equal, that the disk is poised exactly on its centre, and that it be very carefully rotated without the slightest excentricity of motion,—then the stripes, radii, checquers, or whatever figures occupy the surface of the disk, (except concentric circles,) blend into one uniform tint, midway between the colours of the disk, and entirely free from rings.

From this experiment we may deduce:—

1. That when a disk is so divided, that with any radius, a circle would pass through equal portions of the two colours with which the disk is painted, an universal blending of colour will result:

2. That, if at any part of the disk a balance of colour be not observed at opposite sides of the centre, concentric rings will result:

8. That, as the non-existence of that balance depends upon a definite mode of construction, the number and breadth of the rings can be computed:

4. If the equipoise be disturbed by extraneous causes, such as imperfect division, or excentricity of adjustment, the rings are uncertain, and not easily computed.

It will thus be seen that many pleasing experiments may be made with rotating disks, even when viewed in a common way. We now revert to the use of the reflecting mirror.

Fig. 6.

Fig. 7.

When the striated disk spoken of above, is seen by means of the mirror apparatus, it assumes the form of fig. 6. The surface is laid out in curved concentric bands of the greatest symmetry, the number and breadth of which are the same as in the rectilinear striæ. The centre of these concentric segments, which is at the axial end of the slit, is either at or exterior to the edge of the disk, according to the position of the eye. The figure here delineated is produced when the slit cuts the striæ at right angles. When the slit is parallel with the striæ, the figure is totally changed; for the bands appear all rectilinear; but their parallelism to each other is destroyed, as they all seem to diverge from a point situate at the axial end of the slit. When the slit is inclined at an angle of 45° with the striæ, the image presents the shell-like form represented in fig. 7.

Fig. 8

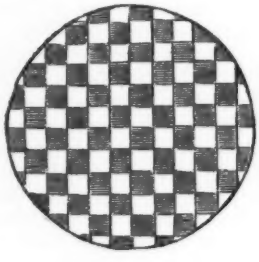
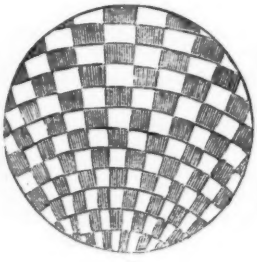


Fig. 9.



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A little consideration will show that changes similar to these in principle, but modified in detail according to circumstances, would follow from the use of any other symmetrical figure. We shall therefore content ourselves with giving illustrations of one more example. Fig. 8 represents a chequered disk, which, when viewed simply while rotating, presents a series of rings somewhat resembling those in fig. 5, the only difference being a more gentle blending of the tints of the concentric rings; but, when the image is viewed through a slit in the disk, as reflected from the mirror, it presents the appearance of a tesselated globe, the illusion occasioned by which is so perfect, that an effort of the mind is required to preserve the idea of a flat surface. The appearance of the chequers, when viewed through a slit parallel with the rectilinear divisions, is such as is represented in fig. 9; evidently partaking of the character of fig. 6, the difference being due to the division of the striæ into squares. If the slit be inclined 45° from the divisions, all the diverging lines proceeding from c cut the diagonals of the chequers, instead of marking their boundaries.

Every change in the mode of forming the slit in the disk, produces a new modification of figure:—thus,

If the disk be diametrically divided into two halves, exactly alike, and the slit be on the line of division, the figure is altogether unchanged; but, if it be at right angles to that line, the half which contains the slit encroaches on the other half, by giving a curvature to the line of division; thus presenting the gibbous form of a three-quarter moon.

All the figures produced by this mirror apparatus are the same in principle as those produced by two revolving disks, the latter arrangement presenting figures modified in every imaginable way, by one or more of the five conditions before stated. As an instance, we may mention, that, when two disks are rotating with unequal velocities, the nucleus towards which the curves tend, or from which they seem to spring, oscillates to and fro; and the curves themselves vary in their number and respective distances from each other.

The mode in which the phenomena before described, *i.e.*, the stationary appearance of a rapidly rotating disk, was explained, will, with some modifications, apply here. In the former, the light comes and goes before the disk has time to move through any sensible space; but in the experiments where the light of a lamp flashes upon the painted disk through the slitted disk; or where the eye is placed behind the slitted disk, and looks through it at the painted one; or where the eye, placed behind the disk, looks through the slit at the image reflected from the mirror,—the duration of the light is greater than the electric light, or than that from the phosphuretted hydrogen, &c., and the disk *does* pass through a sensible space during that time. Now, as the circumference of the disk necessarily moves quicker than the centre, that is, as the velocity decreases from the circumference to the centre, a particular spot, black for example, seen at one point of the circumference will have moved through several degrees, as the slit passes the eye; while, at or near the centre, the space gone through is scarcely appreciable. This, together with the persistence of impression on the retina, will account for the curvature given to the image of the lines.

An amusing modification of the experiment may be made in the following manner:—In a plain disk, cut a slit radially nearly from the centre to the circumference. Below and at right angles to the slit write in large characters any word or words, such as "LIGHT," in an inverted position, so that when seen in a plane mirror, the reflected image may be erect, and in its natural position. On placing the eye behind the disk, the word will be seen through the slit uninterruptedly, provided the disk perform more than six revolutions per second. In this case, the word is seen in a curved form, which is evidently due to the principle before explained, and the letters are all of the same size. Whereas, if the slit be parallel with the order of the letters, the latter appear gradually to increase in size, from the axis to the outer end of the slit.

In these experiments, the disks should be illuminated by a direct light falling upon them; and their backs, where the eye is placed, should be blackened all over.

I LOOK upon every man as a suicide from the moment he takes the dicebox desperately in his hand, and all that follows in his career from that fatal time is only sharpening the dagger before he strikes it to his heart.—CUMBERLAND.

WHEN I walk in the streets, I use the following natural maxim, (viz., that he is the true possessor of a thing who enjoys it, and not he that owns it without the enjoyment of it,) to convince myself that I have a property in the gay part of all the gilt chariots that I meet, which I regard as amusements designed to delight my eyes, and the imagination of those kind people who sit in them gaily attired only to please me. I have a real, and they only an imaginary pleasure from their exterior embellishments. Upon the same principle, I have discovered that I am the natural proprietor of all the diamond necklaces, the crosses, stars, brocades, and embroidered clothes, which I see on a birth-night, as giving more natural delight to the spectator than to those that wear them. And I look on the beaux and ladies as so many paroquets in an aviary, or tulips in a garden, designed purely for my diversion. A gallery of pictures, a cabinet, or library, that I have free access to, I think my own. In a word, all that I desire is the use of things, let who will have the keeping of them. By which maxim I am grown one of the richest men in Great Britain; with this difference, that I am not a prey to my own cares, or the envy of others.—BERKELEY.

ON CHESS.

XII. Biographical Sketch of Philidor.

CHESS-PAWN, AS DESIGNED BY FLAXMAN.

The valiant guards, their minds on havoc bent,
Fill the next square, and watch the royal tent:
Though weak their spears, though dwarfish be their height,
Compact they move, the bulwark of the fight.
Sir William Jones.

It has been remarked, as a curious circumstance, that while the talent for playing chess bears no relation to the general talent of the player, yet that every one has an individual maximum of talent for chess, to which, by study and practice he may be brought but beyond which he cannot pass.

This remark ought to be extended to every mental pursuit, for it expresses a principle of our nature, instead of a curious solitary fact. Those whose chief object it is to improve their mental powers, always find delightful occupation in striving after excellence. We are most fortunately denied the power of *fore*seeing how far our faculties will carry us in the cultivation of a particular subject, but by slow degrees we gradually get nearer and nearer to a certain point, beyond which we find we do not advance. Before this point, however, is attained, we can appreciate the powers of the great masters in the thing studied, for doubtless it requires a certain portion of the same faculties to appreciate excellence as to attain it, and if we cannot equal, we are at least qualified, to admire.

The general progress of knowledge is for the most part made by those gifted men who appear at intervals few and far between, and excel all others in the particular pursuit to which their inclination leads them. We look back upon such men with respect and admiration: we desire to know their history,—their modes of study,—their general conduct in the world and in private life,—and we thus fondly imagine that by endeavouring to imitate them we may gain some of the skill for which they were so famed. It would be unwise to check such feelings, but it is necessary that young people should be cautious in the choice of their models: they should remember that the most eminent men, notwithstanding their eminence, have still the errors and weaknesses of our nature, and that these, being often mistaken for the offshoots of genius, are more easily adopted than their better parts, and prove exceedingly injurious to their imitators.

The subject of our present notice is known to us only as a kind, amiable man, who, had he not been the best chess player of his own, and, perhaps, of any other time, would probably have been known as an eminent musician.

André Danican Philidor was born in the year 1726, at Dreux, a small town about forty-five miles from Paris. His grandfather, whose name was Danican, was celebrated as an oboe player at the court of Louis the Thirteenth. An Italian musician named Philidor was admired at that court for his performance on the same instrument; and after his departure the king gave M. Danican the *soubriquet* or nickname of Philidor, which afterwards continued as an appendage to the family name. The father, and several of the brothers of Philidor, belonged to the band of Louis the Fourteenth and Louis the Fifteenth.

At the age of six years Philidor was admitted into the choir of the Chapel Royal at Versailles, where being obliged to attend daily, he had an opportunity of learning chess from the musicians in waiting, of whom there were about eighty. Games of chance not being allowed in the sanctuary, a long table inlaid with six chess-boards was provided, with which they amused themselves during their leisure hours.

In 1737, when Philidor had only completed his eleventh year he produced a motet for a full choir, which so much pleased the *grand monarque* that he gave him five louis, and thanked him for his performance: this encouraged the lad to compose four more motets; but we do not learn that the royal condescension was followed by any more solid acknowledgment; for at the age of fourteen, when his voice began to change, and he quitted the band, we find him submitting to the drudgery of copying music for his subsistence, and giving a few lessons. When he left the chapel he had the reputation of being the most skilful chess player of the whole band. In 1740 several motets of his composition were performed at the famous *concert spirituel*, established by his uncle in 1726, and these were favourably received by the public as the productions of a child, who was already master of music and of chess. At this time Philidor might have established for himself a lucrative practice as teacher of music; but the fascinations of the chequered field caused him to neglect his musical pupils, and they, in consequence, soon procured other more attentive masters. This induced Philidor to pursue the study of chess, rather than that of music. At this time the game was played in almost every coffee-house in Paris. M. de Kermur, sire de Legalle, was then esteemed the best chess player in France, and young Philidor sought every opportunity of receiving his instructions, by which he improved so essentially, that in three years he played as well as his master.

M. de Legalle once asked Philidor whether he had ever tried to play by memory without seeing the board. The pupil replied that he had calculated moves, and even whole games at night in bed, and he thought he could do it. He immediately played a game with the Abbé Chenard, which he won without seeing the board, and without hesitation upon any of the moves. This circumstance was much talked of in Paris, and consequently he often repeated this method of playing.

Finding it so easy to play a single game without seeing the board, he offered to play two games at the same time. This feat he performed in a public coffee-room, and won both games. In the middle of one of the games a false move was designedly made, which after a great number of moves, he discovered, and placed the piece where it ought to have been at first.

In 1745 Philidor went to Holland to join some musical brethren in a scheme for giving concerts to the Dutch; but the death of one of the party terminated the plan, and Philidor found himself alone in a foreign land without means to support himself. His skill in chess and in Polish draughts procured him enough to supply his wants: he gave lessons in chess to the Prince of Waldeck, who then commanded the Dutch army, and after remaining about a year, chiefly at the Hague, he left Holland.

In 1747 he visited England for the first time. The principal London chess club then held its meetings at

Old Slaughter's coffee-house in St. Martin's Lane. Sir Abraham Janssen was then the best player in England, and with the exception of M. de Legalle, probably the best player Philidor ever encountered. After remaining about a year in England, Philidor returned to Holland, where he composed his celebrated *Analysis of the Game of Chess*. At Aix-la-Chapelle he was advised by Lord Sandwich to visit Eyndhoven, a village between Bois-le-duc and Maestricht, where the British army was encamped. He there had the honour of playing with the Duke of Cumberland, who, not only himself subscribed liberally for a number of copies of the work, but procured many other subscribers. The analysis was published in French, in London, 1749, and has been since reprinted or translated in almost every capital of Europe*.

Philidor frequently played chess at the house of the French ambassador, the Duke of Mirepoix, who gave a weekly dinner to the lovers of the game, at which he himself was expert. The king of Prussia also enjoyed the reputation of being a chess-player, and in 1751 Philidor visited Berlin, by invitation of that monarch, who took great interest in seeing Philidor play, although he did not encounter him himself.

During these chess excursions Philidor did not neglect his musical profession. In 1753 he set to music Congreve's *Ode to Harmony*, which was performed in London. The great Handel was present at the performance, and approved of the chorusses, but thought the melody defective. Two years after he returned to Paris with the intention of devoting himself entirely to his musical profession: he composed some sacred music, and solicited the appointment of *maître de la chapelle*, but as his productions were thought by the Court to savour too much of the Italian style, his application was unsuccessful.

It would be out of place here to follow Philidor through his musical career. Suffice it to say that his compositions comprise more than twenty-five complete operas, some of which were performed with eminent success, besides numerous other musical publications. M. de Laborde, in his voluminous *Essay on Music*, does not hesitate to pronounce Philidor one of the greatest of French composers.

Philidor visited England for the fourth time in 1769. He found chess had now become fashionable: a new club had been formed at the Salopian Coffee House, where he frequently played. Another club was afterwards formed in St. James's Street, next door to the Thatched-house Tavern. The members of the latter club formed a subscription among themselves in order to remunerate Philidor for attending their meetings. The best players in this club, and at that time in London, were Count Bruhl, the Hon. H. Conway afterwards Lord Henry Seymour, Lord Harrowby, Mr. Bowdler, and Mr. Jennings. In playing over the board, the pawn and two moves, or the knight in exchange for the first two moves, were the fair odds between these gentlemen and Philidor†.

The first match played by Philidor in public without seeing the board is recorded in the *Morning Post*, of May 28, 1782. This notice is curious as showing the great sensation occasioned by an exhibition which was then regarded as equally new and wonderful.

The celebrated M. Philidor, whose unrivalled excellence at the game of chess has long been distinguished, invited the members of the chess club, and the amateurs in general of that arduous amusement to be present on Saturday last at a spectacle of the most curious kind, as it was to display a very wonderful faculty of the human mind, which faculty, however, is perhaps at present exclusively his own.

In consequence of this invitation, thirty gentlemen and three ladies attended M. Philidor, at Parsloe's, in St. James's street, where, in their presence, with his eyes closed, he contended with two gentlemen at the same time, who had each a chess-board, and who may be deemed among the first players in Europe next himself. Count Bruhl was his adversary at one board, and Mr. Bowdler at the other, and to each was allowed the first move. The games lasted one hour and forty minutes. The game with the Count was drawn, and Mr. Bowdler won the other, owing to the exact similarity in the openings, for if the two games had less resembled each other, M. Philidor would have preserved a distinct recollection.

The idea of the intellectual labour that was passing in the mind of M. Philidor suggested a painful perception to the spectator, which, however, was quite unnecessary, as *he seldom paused half a minute*, and seemed to undergo little mental fatigue, being somewhat jocose through the whole, and uttering occasionally many diverting pleasantries. The whole passed in the French language.

When the intrinsic difficulty of the game is considered, as well as the great skill of his adversaries, who of course conducted it with the most subtle complications, this exertion seems absolutely miraculous, and certainly deserves to be recorded as a proof, at once interesting and astonishing, of the power of human intelligence.

The periodical called *The World* of the same date, after giving similar details of the match concludes thus:

This brief article is the record of more than sport and fashion: it is a phenomenon in the history of man, and so should be hoarded among the best samples of human memory, till memory shall be no more.

The ability of fixing on the mind the entire plan of two chess-tables, with the multiplied vicissitudes of two-and-thirty pieces in possible employment upon each table, that a man should maintain the two games at once, without seeing either, but merely from the report of move after move upon both; and this contending not with bad and inexperienced play, but with two of the best and most practised players in Europe,—all this makes up a wonder of such magnitude as could not be credited, perhaps would not be credible, without repeated experience of the fact.

This has been had from M. Philidor again and again, but never with more struggle, for his antagonists were Count Bruhl and Mr. Bowdler. They never were more excellent: how much resource there was, and guarded enterprise, may be imagined from the time they took in playing. During the whole of that period the memory of this astonishing man was never for a moment absent nor confused: he made not one mistake.

These wonderful performances procured Philidor more fame than profit; and he himself seems to have been roused to the conviction that his exertions would have been better directed had he acquired a competence for himself and family instead of such unrivalled skill in chess: for we are told that he would never allow any one of his numerous family to learn the game. With a wife and nineteen children entirely dependent upon his labours for support, he found it difficult for many years to procure them more than a very meagre income.

During the latter years of Philidor's life he continued to reside in London in the winter, and with his family at Paris in the summer, occasionally playing matches in public without seeing the board, and generally winning of the best players opposed to him. The following notice appeared in the London newspapers in May, 1783:

Yesterday at the chess-club in St. James's Street, Mr. Philidor performed one of those wonderful exhibitions for which he is so much celebrated. He played three different games at once without seeing either of the tables. His opponents were Count Bruhl, Mr. Bowdler, (the two best players in London) and Mr. Maseres. He defeated Coun. Bruhl in one hour and twenty minutes, and Mr. Maseres in two hours; Mr. Bowdler reduced his game to a drawn battle in an hour and three quarters. To those who understand chess, this exertion of M. Philidor's abilities must appear one of the greatest of which the human memory is

* Philidor brought out a second edition of this work in 1777, with considerable additions. Of the numerous translations of this work into English, the edition by Mr. George Walker is the best.

† Many of the games thus played were preserved in MSS. by the Rev. George Atwood, a pupil of Philidor. These MSS. a few years ago came fortunately into the possession of Mr. George Walker, who has prepared from them a small volume which every amateur ought to possess. It is entitled, "Games at Chess, played by Philidor and his Contemporaries: with Notes and Additions. By George Walker. London, 1835."

susceptible. He goes through it with astonishing accuracy and often corrects mistakes in those who have the board before them.

Between the years 1788 and 1792 Philidor played eight similar matches, each match consisting, in general, of three games; and in 1792 two such matches were played in the presence of the Turkish ambassador. In 1795 when he was at the age of sixty-nine he played three blindfold matches in public, the last of which was thus announced in the daily papers:

Chess Club, 1795, Parslor's, St. James's Street.—By particular desire, Mons. Philidor, positively for the very last time, will play on Saturday, the 20th of June, at 2 o'clock precisely, three games at once against three good chess-players; two of them without seeing either of the boards, and the third looking over the table. He most respectfully invites all the members of the chess-club to honour him with their presence. Ladies and gentlemen not belonging to the club may be provided with tickets at the above-mentioned house to see the match, at five shillings each.

On Saturday, August 29th, 1795, the following sad intelligence appeared in the daily papers.

Mons. Philidor, the Chess-Player.

On Monday last, the 24th of August, this long celebrated foreigner made his last move—into the other world. For two months, he was kept alive merely by art and the kind attentions of an old and worthy friend. To the last moment of his existence he enjoyed, though nearly seventy years of age, a strong and retentive memory, which long rendered him remarkable in the circle of his acquaintance in this capital.

M. Philidor was a member of the chess-club near thirty years, and was a man of those meek qualities that rendered him not less esteemed as a companion, than admired for extraordinary skill in the game of chess, for which he was pre-eminently distinguished.

It is only two months since he played two games blindfold at the same time, against two excellent chess-players, and was declared the victor. He was, besides, an admirable musician and a composer.

What seemed to have shaken the poor old man's constitution, and to have precipitated his exit, was not being able to procure a passport to return to Paris to see his family (who reside there,) before he paid the last debt of nature. This refusal was rendered still more bitter, on its being intimated to him that he was denounced by the blood-thirsty committee of French Revolutionists as a *suspected character*. From the moment he was made acquainted with this circumstance he became a martyr to grief—his philosophy forsook him—his tears were incessant—and he sank into the grave.

We cannot conclude the first part of our course of articles on chess without offering a few remarks to the young player.

While we estimate chess as decidedly the best of games, inasmuch as it gives a wholesome exercise and discipline to the mind, and is, at the same time, a recreation from other pursuits, we must also confess that there was much truth in the remark of James the First that chess is "overwise." When played scientifically it certainly is too absorbing and difficult a subject for mere amusement. Some studious persons find rest and refreshment in a change of pursuit, even though it be from one difficult subject to another equally difficult; but there are few such. We would therefore advise our young readers to restrict themselves in the time they devote to chess, lest this fascinating game become the great object of study and set aside other and more important pursuits. Every age does not produce its Philidor, nor would it generally speaking be a wise application of time and talent to aim at reaching his standard of excellence in this game.

ON THE ORIGIN AND USE OF COUNTERS.

Few persons at the present day, when they see small flat pieces of metal, resembling coins, and called *counters*, are aware of the purpose to which they were originally employed. They are memorials by which we may measure the advance of arithmetical knowledge among the bulk of the people, in other countries as well as our own. Counters, as the name imports, were intended to assist in *counting*, in a manner which we will endeavour to describe.

Before arithmetic, as a science of the mind, was diffused through the nations of Europe, a kind of tangible arithmetic was employed, in performing the operations of addition and subtraction. In a recent paper on Calculating Machines (*Sat. Mag.*, Vol. XVIII., p. 12.) we have spoken of the Roman abacus and the Chinese schwan-pan, and these are some of the means by which tangible arithmetic was performed. It will be remembered that the Roman abacus was a frame, across which several wires were stretched, and that small beads, strung on these wires, were made the instruments of calculation, according to the relative positions which they occupied. The Chinese schwan-pan and the Russian Shtchota were different varieties of the same instrument.

But it is not difficult to see that the same effect might be produced by drawing lines on a board or table, and placing pebbles, coins, or any small objects, on or between them. This was done, and from thence sprang the custom of using counters. It appears that the Greeks used for this purpose small flat, rounded, polished pebbles, which they called *ψηφοι*, and from which they termed the process in which these were used *ψηφοφορια*: hence arise our terms *cypher* and *cyphering*. When the Romans came to adopt a similar plan, they called the counting pebbles *calculi*, from whence we obtain our terms *calculate*, *calculating*, &c. Many centuries after this, small flat pieces of metal were employed for this purpose instead of pebbles: they appear to have been first used in France, and were called *jettons*, from the verb *jetter*, or *jeter*, to cast or move, in allusion to the lateral or vertical movement which they made on the counting-board: the familiar expression, to *cast up* a sum, or to *cast* an account, is a remnant of the times when these pieces of metal were cast or moved from one line on the casting-board to another. When the Dutch began to adopt this plan they applied the term *legpenning* or *legget* (lay-penny, or lay-money,) to the small pieces of metal, from the verb *leggen*, to lay, in allusion to the laying or placing of them on the counting-board. In Germany the piece of metal acquired the name of *Rechenpfennig*, *reckoning penny*, and lastly in England they were called *counters*, appropriately indicating, as did likewise the German "rechnen," the purpose of counting or reckoning to which they were applied.

It will thus be seen that many terms, more or less familiar to us, have become current through the early use of counters in arithmetical computation.

The reader must bear in mind that these pieces of metal did not assume any particular value in the computation on account of their intrinsic worth as metal, but merely from the position they occupied on or between the lines marked on the board or table used for counting. Here again we have the origin of another term in familiar use: a shop-*counter* was originally the board on which the computations between the buyer and seller were made out; and though this custom has long since become obsolete, yet the word "counter" is still applied in this sense.

The pieces of metal used by the moderns for the purpose of computation were originally circular, flat, well-polished, and quite plain. But afterwards they were adorned with ornaments, devices, and legends, which make them highly curious memorials of past times, for some of them contain the name of the person by whom

or for whose use they were made,—the sovereign in whose reign they were employed,—or the particular town or corporation to which they belonged. A brief description of some specimens will show the general character of these metallic counters.

For some centuries previous to the reign of Louis the Twelfth counters were struck in France in great numbers, and they are alluded to by various writers under the names of *gects*, *gectz*, *geteors*, *getoirs*, *gettoirs*, *jectoers*, *jectoirs*, *jetoirs*, *giets*, *gietons*, and *gitones*, all of which are evidently derived from the same verb as *jettons*, and are merely different modes of spelling the same term. Some of these jettons, still in existence, bear legends purporting that they were made for the use of such and such a person,—the Seigneur de Bersele, Monsieur le Chancellier, the Prince de Castelle, Monsieur de Berg, &c. Others purport to have been intended for the use of some of the public offices, such as the Bureau de Finances, and many others. Many of them contain legends of an admonitory character, serving as maxims to encourage correct reckoning, such as *Gardez-vous de mescomptes*,—Be on your guard against mis-counting; *Jettez bien, que vous ne perdriez rien*,—Cast well, that you may lose nothing; *Qui bien jettra, le compte trouvera*,—He who casts well will find his account; *Si vous faillez, le recomptez*,—If you fail, count again; *Bon compte ne font à nulle honte*,—Good counting brings shame to no one; *Comptez et jettez justement, craignant le divin jugement*,—Reckon and cast justly, fearing the divine judgment.

A large number of these jettons had legends in Latin, denoting in most cases the persons, cities, or official bodies, for whose use they were struck. Those made in Holland had not so frequently admonitory mottoes, but had such legends as the following:—*Leggelt van der Munters van Holland*,—lay-money for the coiners of Holland;—*Leggelt der Stadt van Brussel*,—lay-money for the city of Brussels. Nuremburg in Germany appears to have been particularly distinguished for the number of jettons, or as we must here term them, *rechenpfennigs*, made there. These contained, in some instances, the arms of the city; in others, the bust of some public character; in others, an allegorical subject; in others, the name of the parties by or for whom they were issued; and in most of them an inscription of some kind or other. On one, of which a representation is now before us, there is "Cornelius Lauffer, in Nurnberg;" and on the other side, *Glückbeschert ist unverwehrt*,—What is allotted by fortune is not forbidden. It would appear that the family of Lauffer was of considerable importance in the town of Nuremburg; for we find many counters bearing that name; on one is inscribed *Chourat Lauffer Nurnb.*, and *Anfang bedenkt Ende*:—the beginning considers the end; on another, *Matheus Lauffer, Nurnb., Soli Deo Gloria*,—Glory to God alone; on another, *Woolf Lauffer, Rechenpfennig*; and *Gottes Segen macht reich*,—God's blessing makes rich. One contains the legend *Glück von Gott ist*,—Fortune is from God; another, *Fleissige Rechnung macht Richtigkeit*,—Diligent reckoning produces correctness; and within the border which is formed by this legend are all the letters of the alphabet; the obverse represents a man standing before a counting-table or board, and performing a computation by means of counters. One, purporting to be made by Hans Krauwinckel, bears the legend, *Arbeit und Tugend machen dich edel*,—Industry and virtue make thee noble.

It became a practice in the fifteenth century, to distribute jettons as Etrennes, or New Year's Gifts, at the public expense, in Holland. To the most considerable officers of the United Provinces, such as the Governor General, the governor of each separate province, the Inspector of the Canal at Brussels, &c., were presented a certain number of silver and copper jettons, which were put either into a splendid purse, or into a silver box. The value of these jettons, given away as new year's presents, varied from seven hundred to three thousand pounds per annum, according to the number of persons to whom they were presented. To every person thus honoured was given a *Jett*, or a particular number of jettons necessary for the performance of computation. This custom of presenting jettons in the form of a new year's gift, was continued long after the disuse of jettons in calculation; and was afterwards regarded so far as a prescriptive right, that the Dutch officers, down to the latter part of the last century, received a certain sum of money annually in lieu of the jett of jettons given in earlier times.

It appears that the Nuremburg artists had mills at which these counters were made, and that the greater part of the counters used in Europe was made by them. In nearly all cases, these counters were, for cheapness, made of copper; but the wealthier classes had them of silver, and even of gold. Corporations, abbeys, monasteries, and churches, whose revenues required a good deal of computation, were frequently provided with counters appropriated to their own use; and it is thus that we are to explain the meaning of "abbey-pieces," applied to some kinds of counters, frequently found among the ruins of abbeys. The diffusion of the knowledge of arithmetic among all the countries of Europe, has however led to the abandonment of this mode of computation; and we may now regard counters merely as monuments of old times.

Touch-pieces were a sort of coins, of which the king, when he *touched* a person in order to cure the evil, used to hang one round the neck of the patient. English touch-pieces usually bore the device of St. Michael and the Dragon on one side, and a ship on the other. This is a very ancient superstition. The latest of these pieces are of James II., Queen Anne, and the Pretender.

A SHARK is one whom all other means have failed, and now he lives of himself. He is some needy cashiered fellow, whom the world hath oft flung off, yet still clasps again, and is like one a drowning, fastens upon anything that is next at hand. Amongst other of his shipwrecks he has lost shame, and this want supplies him. No man puts his brain to more use than he, for his life is a daily invention, and each meal a new stratagem. He has an excellent memory for his acquaintance: though there passed but how do you betwixt them seven years ago, it shall suffice for an embrace, and that for money. He offers you a pottle of sack out of joy to see you, and in requital of his courtesy you can do no less than pay for it. He is fumbling with his purse-strings, as a schoolboy with his points, when he is going to be whipped, till the master, weary with long stay, forgives him. When the reckoning is paid, he says, it must not be so, yet is straight pacified, and cries, What remedy? His borrowings are like subsidies, each man a shilling or two, as he can well dispend; which they lend him, not with a hope to be repaid, but that he will come no more. He holds a strange tyranny over men, for he is their debtor, and they fear him as their creditor. He is proud of any employment, though it be but to carry commendations, which he will be sure to deliver at eleven of the clock. They in courtesy bid him stay, and he in manners cannot deny them. If he find but a good look to assure his welcome, he becomes their half-boarder, and haunts the threshold so long, till he forces good nature to the necessity of a quarrel. Public invitations he will not wrong with his absence, and is the best witness of the sheriff's hospitality. Men shun him at length as they would do an infection, and he is never crossed in his way if there be but a lane to escape him. He has done with the age as his clothes to him, hung on as long as he could, and at last drops off.—BISHOP EARLE.

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